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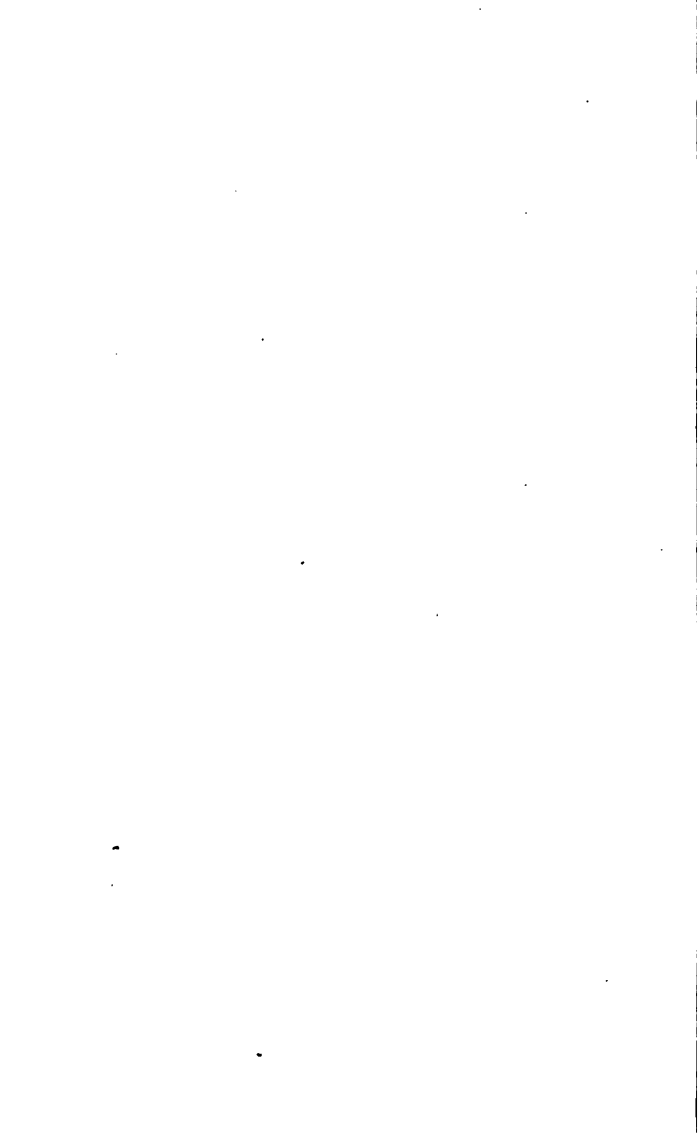
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A
MONTH'S
EXCURSION

"To scenes where mirth awaited me
In rich variety of hue."

MOXON. 16

Ventured to be Described

By JOHN COLE,

For the Information of his Friends.

—
SCARBOROUGH:

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A
MONTH'S
EXCURSION.

ON the afternoon of a resplendent day—for the tenth of November—I left the picturesque place, with its venerable castle, called Scarborough, or, in the olden time, *Scearburg*, for York, on my route to London. The day was one of the month's best, and the sun-set was golden and gem-like—and filled me full of meditation; the trees were beautifully diversified in colours by the tints of the season, while in many hedges the falling leaves reminded me of our common

mortality—thus found I a sermon in a leaf. The first objects which strikingly arrested my attention, after waving an affectionate kiss to my dear little girls upon the road,

“ who seem created for each other,”

and are,

“ Like Juno’s swans, coupled and inseparable,”

were Hutton Bushell Church and Mansion, richly embedded in the security of well cultured trees ; and soon after the lake of Wykeham Abbey presented itself, clear as the day, reflecting on its surface the cheerful pageantry of the many-coloured woods. The fugitive hours quickly passed away and conveyed us to Malton, twenty miles distant from Scarborough,

“ When night shed its veil o’er the plains,”

and we betook ourselves to thought, meditation, sleep, or what you will. Thus fade the evanescent beauties of day ! At about seven we reached the old—very old city of York ; and on the following morning I inspected the new Museum there erecting ; its situation is peculiarly inviting, being near the ruins of the venerable St.

Mary's Abbey; and during the progress in digging the foundations many architectural fragments were disclosed, which are now lying about, presenting somewhat of an idea of the ruins of Herculaneum. The entrance gateway is from a particularly neat design. Eustachius Strickland, Esq. of York, is now preparing an account of discoveries made in digging the foundation. The noble Cathedral was duly noticed. Forsake me not, it seemed to cry. It is, indeed, the *Lion* of the City. If ever that word were duly appropriated—here it rises in full weight; aye, and that majestically. I then proceeded to the Repository of a neighbouring bookseller, and warmed my hands (it being a frosty morning) with an *Ulric Zel*, and a fine specimen of York binding. Now

“ To breakfast with what appetite ye may,”

and it appeared grouped in varied orders and colours, and was soon disarranged. At ten away—get into the Express Coach for London. A foggy atmosphere prevailed for two or three hours;—then cleared away, and disclosed some remarkably beautiful scenery. After passing Dringhouses and Streethouses, we reached the small market town, Tadcaster, and then proceeded to Towton, Barkston, and Sherburn, noted for its plums,

celebrated for a great many miles round. After South Milford, we reached *Brotherton*, a great lime-burning place, the rocks being excavated into romantic shapes. It has a fine bridge over the river or canal, and the town itself is built of the beautiful magnesian lime-stone, and was then illumined by the tempered rays of a November's sun, so as to produce an enchanting picture, which is almost indelibly fixed upon my memory. After passing Ferrybridge, Darrington, Wentbridge, Robin Hood's Well, and Red House, we reached the distinguished *Doncaster*, a handsomely built town, and on quitting it, the renowned race course appeared to view. Shortly after, the brightness of the sun's hues began to decline, and a glowing *set* was soon produced. As dusky evening approached, we reached Barnby Moor and dined; after which sable night enveloped us, and bounded our pleasant prospects, or rather exchanged them for the, sometimes, no less pleasing vagaries of the brain. Morning again broke in upon us about Biggleswade, clear and beautiful, but as we drew near the metropolis, the atmosphere became damp, and at length we drove into a fog, which became more dense as we proceeded, until at length, on entering LONDON, we found it quite palpable, and

our eyes could not far penetrate the gloom. It proved to be one of the heaviest fogs which had prevailed in "this wonderful City" for many years. The papers of the following morning thus decribed its effects; "the fog of yesterday has seldom been exceeded in opacity in the metropolis and its neighbourhood. It began to thicken very much about half-past twelve, from which time till near two, the effect was most distressing, making the eyes smart, and almost suffocating those who were in the streets, particularly asthmatic persons. In the City, all the Bankers, and offices of different descriptions, as well as the principal shops, were obliged to have lights. To see with any distinctness farther then across the street was impossible; all the narrow lanes beyond the perception of a few yards were absolutely in a state of darkness, and in the great thoroughfares, the halloing of coachmen and drivers to avoid each other, seemingly issuing from the opaque mass in which they were enveloped, was calculated to awaken all the caution of riders, as well as of pedestrians who had to cross the streets. On the Thames, as on on land, the tendency which fog has to enlarge distant objects, was strikingly illustrated; the smallest vessels on their approach seemed magnified to thrice their

sual dimensions. St. Paul's had a prodigious effect through the mist, though neither that, nor the monument, was visible above the height of the houses. This optical illusion is said to arise from the fog diminishing the brightness of objects, and, consequently, suggesting a greater distance; whereas, when the visual angle remains the same, the greater the distance, the greater the magnitude; hence objects at a moderate distance appear to be magnified. Lord Bacon defines these periodical mists to be imperfect condensations of a large proportion of the air, and a small one of the aqueous vapour, and to happen most in winter, about the change of the weather from frost to thaw, or from thaw to frost; others describe them as clouds resting on the ground. These are on most occasions considerably elevated in the air; but in all countries they are sometimes found on the surface of the earth, causing a degree of opacity in the air, which is greater or less according to circumstances. Mr. Boyle observes, that on the coast of Coromandel and most maritime parts of the East Indies, there are, notwithstanding the heat of the climate, annual fogs so thick as to occasion people of other nations, who reside there, and even the more tender part of the natives, to keep their houses close shut up.

“ A principal reason for fogs being more frequent in winter than in summer, and more particularly on the sea coasts, and in the vicinity of great rivers, is said to arise from the greater capacity of water for heat than earth; consequently the former is more slowly brought to the temperature of the atmosphere upon any change. In winter sometimes a sudden cold is induced by a change of wind; the air then is coldest; next to it the land, and last the water; which is but slowly reduced to temperature for the reason mentioned. Many instances occur of great fogs in summer. In the month of June, 1783, a letter from Dover states a fog to have then continued at that part longer than had ever been known in the oldest memory, and in consequence they had not been able to descry the coast of France for three weeks.” Thus far the newspaper.

After dining, I started off in the midst of the density of the fog and walked the whole length of Holborn and Oxford-street, and down part of Edgware road, exploring my clouded way as I could; but at length the gas illuminated the shops and streets of this huge metropolis, and in some measure dispelled the dreariness. Every visit to London more strikingly and

intensely interests me in its wonders. I was always in my boyish days, smitten with its beauties, nor are its effects less pleasing in my manhood. The vastness of the town, as a critic observes, "is a wonder;" and another writer depicts its attractions, in this strong language :

"If you would throw the whole of human happiness and enjoyment, the encyclopædia of human bliss, into the alembic, and draw from it a quintessence which could be named by a single word, that word would be LONDON."

The morning after my arrival was fortunate enough to view Mr. Upcott's fine Collection of Autographs; and to have an interview of Mr. Edmeston, the Poet. On Friday, the grand improvements in the Regency Park arrested my attention, and enriched my spirits. Viewed St. Katharine's Chapel, Hospital, &c. After this to the Diorama. Next called on Mr. C. J. Smith, the Engraver. Returned to my head quarters, Snow Hill, in a pitiless storm. After tea paid my respects to the Author of "The Prospect, and other Poems." Saturday, to the Zoological Gardens. Inspected the Temple

Church. Sunday, to St. Paul's in the Morning ; Afternoon, to St. Mary's, Bryanston Square, and Evening to Rev. Basil Woodd's. Tuesday, 18th Nov. left London for Northampton. Wednesday, 19th, to Ecton, where, and at Twywell Lodge, I spent the days until my return to Scarborough.

